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C O N F I D E N T I A L TAIPEI 001231

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/18/2018

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SUBJECT: VFM HSIA ON TAIWAN'S UN STRATEGY, TRANSIT, DEFMIN  
VISIT AND EXTRADITION AGREEMENT

Classified By: AIT Acting Director Robert S. Wang, Reason 1.4 (b/d)

11. (C) Summary: Whatever its ultimate fate at the UNGA, Taiwan hoped the United States and other key partners would respond positively to President Ma's flexible and innovative approach on "international space," Vice Foreign Minister (VFM) Andrew Hsia told AIT Acting Director Wang during their August 18 meeting. Otherwise, Hsia warned, the Ma administration could face domestic pressure to return to a more confrontational approach. President Ma appreciated U.S. facilitation of his recent U.S. transit and, as agreed, had kept it low-key. Hsia said, however, that many in the U.S. were disappointed they were not able to meet with Ma. A/DIR noted that Washington hoped Defense Minister Chen would maintain a similar low profile during his upcoming visit and said the Department remained interested in concluding an extradition agreement, although timing remained an open question. End Summary.

#### LOOKING FOR SUPPORT FOR A CONTROVERSIAL STRATEGY

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12. (C) VFM Andrew Hsia met AIT Taipei A/DIR Wang August 18 to discuss Taiwan's strategy at the upcoming UNGA that Hsia announced at an August 15 press conference. For the first time, Hsia said, Taiwan was not seeking UN membership or reconsideration of its status. Instead, Taiwan had taken the advice of the United States and other key partners and was focusing only on expanding meaningful participation in UN specialized agencies. Asked why Taiwan chose to pursue this at UNGA, Hsia agreed that UN specialized agencies are only indirectly related to the General Assembly but explained it was more efficient to seek consensus on the general principle in a broad forum, while leaving the question of what constitutes "meaningful participation" to the individual agencies. In the case of the WHA, for example, this would mean granting Taiwan observer status.

13. (C) Hsia agreed that reaching consensus in the UNGA depended largely on China, but emphasized that it was critical that the proceedings "go smoothly," whatever the final outcome. Hsia suggested that Taipei had consulted with Beijing on this issue although he did not know the details or outcome. Meanwhile, he said, Taiwan hoped the United States and other key partners would speak in favor of the proposal and that UNGA President Nicaragua would note the importance of giving the people on Taiwan a voice. Already, some on Taiwan had criticized Ma for his new, flexible policy, arguing that he had compromised Taiwan's interests in an

effort to accommodate the PRC. Without a public, positive response from friends like the United States, Hsia said, the administration would come under increasing domestic pressure to return to a more confrontational strategy.

#### MA'S LOW-KEY TRANSIT AND DEFENSE MINISTER VISIT

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¶4. (C) President Ma appreciated U.S. facilitation of his recent transit and had kept his word that it would be low-profile. Hopefully, Hsia said, the confidence built in this trip would be reflected in the handling of future transits. Hsia commented that many in the U.S. were disappointed they were unable to meet President Ma during his transit. A/DIR Wang pointed out that specific transit arrangements will depend on particular circumstances, including the timing.

¶5. (C) A/DIR noted that there was some concern about the profile of Defense Minister Chen's upcoming U.S. visit, particularly his planned press conference following a meeting of the U.S.-Taiwan Business Council in Florida. VFM Hsia said he would convey these concerns to the Ministry of Defense. (Note: AIT will also be conveying these concerns through our military channels.)

#### MOVING FORWARD ON AN EXTRADITION AGREEMENT

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¶6. (SBU) VFM Hsia welcomed A/DIR Wang's reassurances that the Department continues to be interested in an extradition agreement and was taking steps to energize the process.  
WANG